

A Message from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

President John F. Kennedy once said: “There are risks and costs to a program of action, but they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.”

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has emphatically chosen to act on behalf of America’s 25 million living veterans and their families. By reengineering our health-care system and revising eligibility requirements, our agency has torn down the bureaucratic barriers separating veterans from their medical and compensation benefits.

We have allocated resources to accommodate the changing needs of the men and women we serve.

This is the fourth Annual Accountability Report that the Department has prepared under the Office of Management and Budget’s pilot program for streamlining government reporting. Included in this report are overviews of how VA is performing its mission, our accomplishments under the Government Performance and Results Act, our most recent audited financial statements, and the status of our internal management controls.

All of these indicators show that VA is making good on America’s promise to our Nation’s veterans. To continue to keep that promise, we must move forward aggressively to ensure improved delivery of pension and compensation benefits; complete the transition to a more efficient, patient-focused healthcare system; and consolidate organizational elements into *One VA*. Our veterans deserve no less.



Togo D. West, Jr.